



ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HERALD



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AUGUST 2011

August 15 -- A Most Holy and Sacred Feast

"She is the unshaken Throne of the King, the Abode in which the Most High has dwelt. She is the salvation of the world, the Most Holy Place of God, who richly grants unto the faithful great mercy on this her holy feast."

- Vespers of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos



If there has been one headline in the news that has dominated all other headlines these last few years, it has certainly been the national recession our country is currently in the midst of. It seems that every newspaper, news channel, and news website is covering all aspects of the "Great Recession" around the clock, especially the different ways that it has affected different parts of the country, different types of jobs, and different people. One aspect of the coverage that one sees is the different attempts that our government has made to curb this problem, none of which have been able to unlock the door to a solution. Effort is made, energy is spent, but it seems as if the methods we use don't quite seem able to reach a solution, that is, to give aid to those who need it.

In many of the services of our Orthodox Church, we often hear hymns chanted to the Theotokos asking for assistance and aid in times of need. Indeed, phrases are used such as "the help of all the helpless," and "the cure of those in sickness," because we believe that Mary, as we read in the Holy Scriptures, hears our prayer requests for help, and not only conveys them to Jesus, but also helps us herself. In the tra-

dition of our Orthodox Christian faith, no other holy figure (aside from the Lord Himself) have more miracles been attributed to than the Mother of God. One often hears about dreams and visions of Mary coming to help someone in need, or even someone fervently praying to her for healing who is then healed. Certainly, even members of our parish have had experiences in which she has come to help us. The common thread through all of these stories is the incredible love that the Mother of God has for all people, and the power that her intercessory prayers have before the Lord.

On the fifteenth of this month, we celebrate the memory of the Panagia's life on *this* side of the Kingdom, as that is the day that she fell asleep in the Lord- hence the name, "Koimisis" or, "Dormition of the Theotokos." Many of our Christian brethren of the West call this feast day the "Assumption" of Mary, which refers to our shared belief that Mary's whole body was "assumed" or went to heaven when she died (which is also why our Church does not believe that any relics of the Theotokos exist on earth).

Among the hymns of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, we chant a hymn which says that Mary "grants unto the faithful great mercy on this her holy feast." This refers to her constant "relief efforts," which, no matter how bad of a situation we find ourselves in, there is no stumbling block, no barrier, no wall that can separate us from the aid which the Panagia provides for us if we call upon her for help. Unlike human attempts at relief, which may fall short or may be found inadequate to help, there is no attempt that the Panagia makes that will ever be inadequate. All we have to do is ask.

In this season of the Panagia's fast (the first two weeks of August), let us remember her special role in our salvation, and by renewing our fasting and our prayer life, remember that she always hears us when we need help.



August 15- Deacon Niko's Ordination to the Priesthood

On Monday, August 15th, the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at the Cathedral by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, who, by the laying on of hands will ordain Deacon Niko Bekris to the holy priesthood. As we read in the book of Acts, this tradition of ordaining the different orders of the clergy was established by the Apostles themselves through the laying on of hands (hence the name "heirotonia" from the Greek word for hand), and has continued to the present day through our Orthodox bishops, who also ordain through the laying on of hands.

Deacon Niko and Diakonissa Stella humbly request the prayers of all members of our community during this momentous time in their life, and thank everyone for the love and support that they have shown them these last three years. God willing, it is Metropolitan Gerasimos' plan to assign the future Father Niko to the Cathedral for at least the near future, and in an increased capacity. Under the mentorship and guidance of Father Stephen and Father Gregory, and the participation of our entire Annunciation family, let us continue to help our parish grow closer to the Lord and preach His Gospel.

Note: All members of our community are invited to attend the ordination and the luncheon following. If you have not yet RSVPed to the invitation you have received, please do so at your earliest convenience.

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos Elected to Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Each year, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople appoints twelve bishops under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate to serve on the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which meets monthly in Constantinople. Each bishop under the Patriarch's jurisdiction serves a one-year term, after which twelve new bishops are appointed.

Metropolitan Gerasimos was appointed to this year's Synod, and he began his monthly trips to Constantinople this last March. Each month, His Eminence brings with him one clergyman from our Metropolis. His Eminence travelled with Deacon Niko for his March trip, and more recently, Father Stephen travelled with His Eminence in July.

The Patriarchate itself has a rich and storied history as it has played a vital role in the growth of world Christianity. Each of the seven Ecumenical Councils (councils which were convened in the early centuries of the Church to clearly distinguish the difference between the core truth of our faith from heresy), were convened in or near Constantinople, and since the fifth century, the Patriarch of Constantinople has been viewed by all Orthodox Christians as the "first [bishop] among equals," holding a special place of leadership within all of Orthodoxy.

The Patriarchate, the Great Mother Church of Constantinople, also sent the missionaries which brought Christianity to much of Eastern and Northern Europe, Russia, and even parts of the Orient. Today, the Patriarch, under oppression and harassment by the Turkish government, nevertheless holds conferences and dialogues aimed at peace and unity amongst all Christians, including the Roman Catholic Church, and is an ardent proponent of the environment.

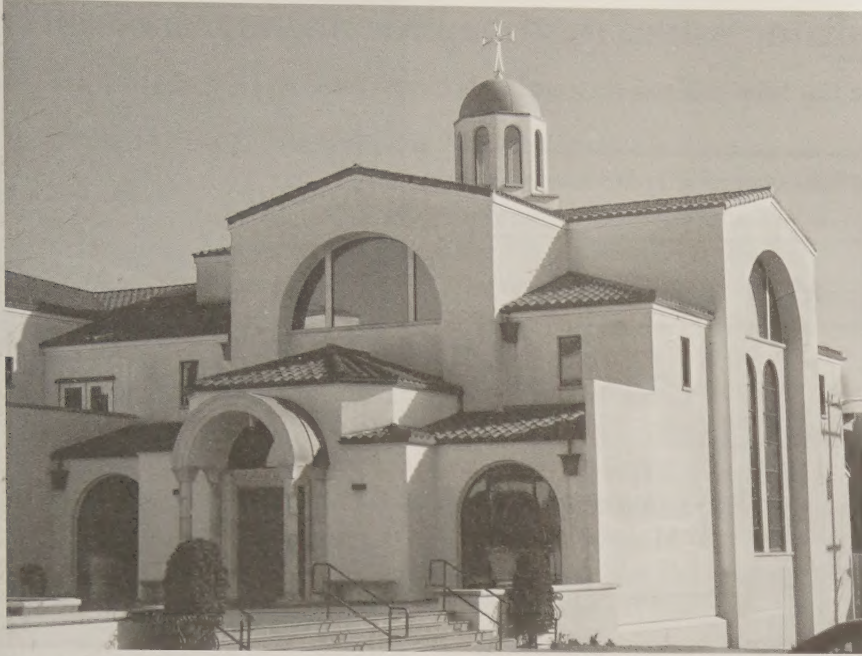
As you no doubt have read or heard already, or perhaps saw in the excellent 60 Minutes special with His All Holiness, our Mother Church requires prayers and support from all Christians all over the world, in order to continue its good works in the proclamation of the Good News.

"The Lord's Word is not only Truth, but also Spirit and Life. In the same way Orthodoxy is not only truth, but also spirit and life."

- Archbishop John Shahovskoy

"God helps us when there is no one else to help. God is there at the point of tension, at the breaking point, at the center of the storm."

- Archbishop Anthony Bloom



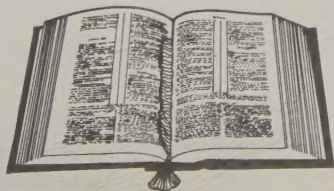
Cathedral Exterior to be Repainted This Summer

Construction of our beautiful Cathedral building was completed nearly twenty years ago and originally painted with the beautiful white coat we see today. After nearly two decades, however, wear has begun to take its toll.

Demartini Painting, recommended by **Mike Vriheas**, and approved by the Parish Council, has already begun the process of repainting the church this summer. After the stucco is cleaned, all hairline cracks are repaired, and a prime coat is added, the entire building will be repainted. All told, the project will cost roughly \$30,000, and will be completed by mid-August. Hopefully, this new coat will last even longer than the original!

New Website for Orthodox Christian Job Hunters

Recently, a new website was launched that is geared toward helping Orthodox Christians find jobs! The site is *Orthodoxjobs.com*, and could be a promising avenue for anyone looking for a job in today's challenging economic climate. Certainly a unique venture, this could potentially help Christians in our parish find a job that takes our faith into account, as well.



Growing Our "Link" to Our Community

As has been mentioned many times (and hopefully many more times), our Cathedral family is grateful for the efforts of our Community Link group these last five years. Once a month, this wonderful ministry of our church meets and visits homebound, hospitalized, institutionalized parishioners, or any type of parishioner who cannot make it to church on their own. By doing so, these committed people are bring a message of "We love you and care about you" to each of our shut-ins, fulfilling the Lord's call to visit those who are sick. Thank you.

If you are interested in joining Community Link once a month, or even learning more about the program, contact Pauline Oetzel, now heading the program, at poetzel@hotmail.com. Community Link's next gathering is on Saturday, August 20 at 9 am. Sometimes just seeing a familiar face is all someone needs to brighten their day. Please consider giving this joy to someone in need this month.

Upcoming Community Link Meetings:

August 20, September 17, October 15, November 19, and December 17.

Food Festival Cooking Schedule

The 2011 Greek Food Festival Cooking Schedule has been put together and is as follows:

Tiropites	Tuesday, August 2, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Wednesday, August 3, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm
Galaktobouriko	Tuesday, August 9 Wednesday, August 10
Mousaka	Friday, August 12, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Saturday, August 13, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Chairperson: Loula Vriheas
Spanakopita	Tuesday, August 16, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Wednesday, August 17, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Thursday, August 18, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Chairperson: Rose Sogotis
Baklava	Tuesday, August 23
Green Beans	Thursday, August 25 Friday, August 26
Peppers	Tuesday, August 30 Wednesday, August 31 Thursday, September 1
Kourambiedes	Tuesday, September 6 Wednesday, September 7
Pastitsio	Friday, September 9, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Saturday, September 10, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Chairperson: Loula Vriheas
Chickens/Prep	Tuesday, September 13 Wednesday, September 14
Diples	Thursday, September 15
Dolmades	Friday, September 16, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday, September 19, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Chairperson: S. Stavropoulos
Souvlakia Cutting	Tuesday, September 20
Tarama	Tuesday, September 20 Wednesday, September 21
Rice Pudding	Wednesday, September 21, 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Chairperson: Rose Sogotis

We thank all our volunteers who come help at our food festival each year, donating so much of their time and energy for our church. As always, more volunteers are always welcome. Working for a common good is a wonderful feeling, as anyone who has assisted at the festival can attest to, but working together also inspires camaraderie and fellowship.

If you have not helped in any of the aforementioned areas before and would like to do so, it would be greatly appreciated.

Looking for More Treasure for Yiayia's Attic

The last few years, a staple of our food festival has been the wonderful *yiayia's attic*, headed by **Meena Vellis**. I'm sure we all remember something special about going to yiayia's (grandma's) house, and always finding something hidden, something we hadn't seen before, or something from another time. If you would like to share what's in your attic, and donate it for *yiayia's attic* we would invite you to bring it to the Cathedral and leave it with the Cathedral office, as we are still looking for more items. **Meena and Mike Canellos** will make sure that your items are properly stored until the festival. If you have any questions on where or what to bring, feel free to contact either Meena or Mike at (650) 401-3969, or (415) 864-8813, respectively.

Items we are looking for, and which you are invited to donate, include: children's toys, puzzles, CDs, household items, jewelry, games, DVDs, books, and new linens.

Please do NOT bring: used linens, baby furniture or other baby items, towels, clothes or shoes.

"Like a Mom to Me"

by Rev. Deacon Niko Bekris

When I was a kid, I used to go to Greece with my family for the entire summer every two years to visit my grandparents and other relatives. And when I say all summer I really mean ALL summer- June to August (sometimes May/September). I'm not sure how many of you reading this have been to Greece, or ever spent time in another country, but I happen to think it's a great experience in order to get a different perspective on how we live in the USA. One of the things I really... *disliked* about visiting Greece was driving through the mainland to see relatives. Don't get me wrong, I loved seeing my relatives, but have you ever driven a car in Greece? The country roads aren't very easy on passengers, let's just put it that way. But simultaneously, driving through Greece (the Peloponnesus, to be exact) was one of the most mind-blowing experiences of my life that I will always be thankful for. Again, NOT because of swervy mountain roads, but because no matter where we went, my parents would point out a church or some monument, saying "This is where this or that miracle happened," or "This is where a saint was martyred by the Turks," or any number of amazing miracles. It was almost as if, after nearly 2000 years of Christianity in the same country, a huge miracle of some kind had taken place every few miles!

This is certainly something we don't find in the States (yet!), and a shock to my young mind that made me understand that God was real. A very common thread through many of these miracles was the appearance of the Theotokos. There are so many powerful stories of the Panagia appearing, assisting, guiding, speaking, loving Christians who call upon her! Stories of her saving travelers, appearing to people in their sleep, or while awake, to give a message or some kind of instruction, a miraculous healing, and many, many more kinds of assistance. In many parts of Greece- indeed, the world- Mary is revered very strongly for everything that she has done for the history of salvation, from giving birth to God, to being a constant intercessor, protector, and guide to all who call upon her. She is viewed as a mother to all believers, and rightfully so.

Later this month, we will celebrate the feast of the Dormition (Falling Asleep) of the Theotokos, or the Assumption, as it is most often referred to in this country. You probably know this already, but the day a holy person dies, or is *translated into the Kingdom*, is the day that we celebrate their memory. We will celebrate Mary's memory on August 15, one of the greatest feast days of the Church, and a day when we remember just how much Panagia loves us, and how she, too, wants to have a relationship with us, and lead us towards God, towards heaven. Anything we ask of God we should also ask of His Mother, because she wants us to be protected, to be loved, and to be saved. Let's remember this.

Because like any Greek child knows, mom has dad's ear in a way no one else does.



New Recycling Bins in the Korinthias Hall

In an effort to make our Cathedral grounds more "green," new recycling bins have been placed in the Cathedral's gym, with clearly marked pictures to direct what items go in which bin. Following the example of our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, a staunch supporter of the environment, let us all make a concerted effort to facilitate recycling on our grounds, thus helping keep our city clean and preserving our environment.

Services & Sacraments At The Cathedral

BAPTISMS

Matteo Alessandro, son of **Denis James Vorrises** and **Renee Mendoza Vorrises**, was baptized at the Cathedral June 25. His Godparents are **Konstantinos Panayiotis** and **Stephanie Marie Koutoulas**.

Nicholas Richard, son of **Harry Paul** and **Lisa Marie Radiotes Efstratis**, was baptized at the Cathedral June 25. His Godparents are **Christopher Nicholas Efstratis** and **Valerie Morgan**.

Na mas zisoun! (Long life!)

Space Available for Annunciation Cathedral 13th Annual Family Camping Trip

August 5-10

6 days, 5 nights at Casini Ranch Family Campground on the Russian River
www.casiniranch.com

Experience the beauty and excitement of California's North Coast at Casini Ranch Family Campground, nestled on the historic Russian River. One hundred twenty acres of family fun and a mile of sandy waterfront await you! Enjoy hiking, bicycling, volleyball, softball, horseshoes and fishing. Drift along the river in a canoe or just relax on the beach.

Each year this trip offers diversion and fellowship for all the families that come. This is a wonderful program which allows us an opportunity to leave our confines in the city and reconnect with God's creation. For reservations and more information, please contact Ari Stratakis at 415-706-9888.

Family of 2 persons: \$400
Family of 3 persons: \$430
Family of 4 persons: \$450
Family of 5 persons: \$470

Limit 1 tent per family (Price does not include tent)
Price includes all meals

General Store, Hot Showers, Laundromat, and Playground
all located on campgrounds.

Checks Payable to Annunciation Cathedral
Please send checks to:
Ari Stratakis
717 Hill Avenue
South San Francisco, CA 94080



Family Camp: "Our Cathedral families who attended Family Camp 2009"

PRAYER OF A CHILD

Our Father in heaven, bless my parents, guardians, and those in authority over me, for the love, tender care, and benefits I receive at their hands. Grant me your grace to perform my duties carefully and faithfully, avoid undesirable company and influence, and resist all temptation that may come my way, living a sober, righteous, and Godly life, ever praising you and glorifying your holy name. Amen.



PRAYER BEFORE TRAVEL

O Savior, as you journeyed with Luke and Cleopas on the road to Emmaus, journey also with your servants, defending them from all evil. Surround them with your holy angels. Grant that they may carry out their plans according to your will, for you alone are almighty and love mankind.

Amen.

AUGUST CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JULY 31	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Paraklesis 10 a.m.		Paraklesis 10 a.m.		Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ, Divine Liturgy 10 am
July 31-August 6 – High School Week at Saint Nicholas Ranch Summer Camp						
					August 5-10 – Annunciation Cathedral Family Camp	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
August 5-10 – Annunciation Cathedral Family Camp				Paraklesis 10 a.m.		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10:30 am	Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, Ordination of Deacon Niko, Orthros 9am, Divine Liturgy 10am, Luncheon following	August 16-20 – Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am daily				
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10:30 am	August 22-27 – Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am daily					
28	29	30	31			
Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10:30 am	August 29-31– Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am daily					



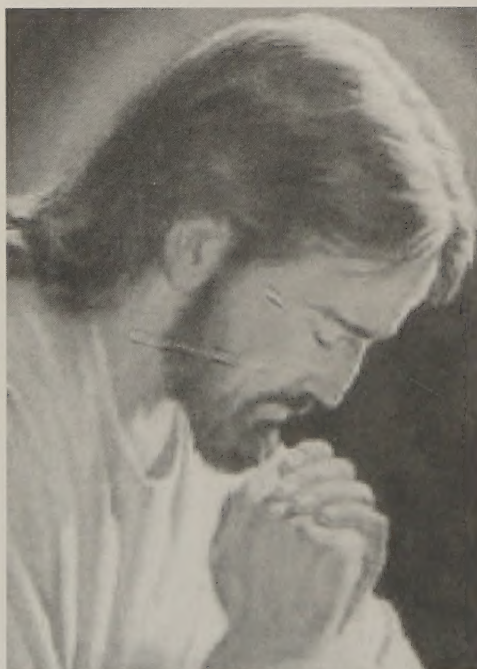
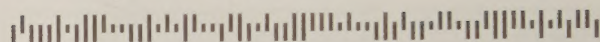
“If we use crumbs of wasted time to try to build short moments for recollection and prayer, we may discover that there is quite a lot of it.”

- Archbishop Anthony Bloom

UNITED GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF
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PRAYER OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Lord Jesus Christ, by your presence you blessed the wedding in Cana and showed us that you are the true priest of mystical and pure marriage. WE thank you for the day on which by your heavenly benediction you joined us in the sacrament of matrimony. Lord, continue to bless and enrich our marriage in love, companionship, mutual support, oneness of heart, and progress in faith and life. Protect our holy wedlock from sin, evil, and danger. Foster between us the spirit of understanding, the spirit of forgiveness, and the spirit of peace, that no resentment, quarrel, or other problem cause us to stumble and fall. Grant us to see our own faults and not to judge each other. Keep our bond of love always new. Gladden our hearts with the joys of marriage, that with one heart we may praise and glorify you. Amen.